

# CSU Extension Food Systems Newsletter

*Dawn Thilmany, Martha Sullins, Adrian Card, Ragan Adams, Becca Jablonski & Marisa Bunning, Team Leads*



**Co-Editors: Dawn Thilmany, Martha Sullins and Jeremy Christensen  
Dept. of Ag and Resource Economics**

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Welcome to the **73<sup>rd</sup> edition** of the Colorado State University Extension Local Food Systems newsletter. As a key resource connecting our CSU team with local and state partners about events, news and opportunities, we are thrilled to see the momentum and growth happening in food systems across the state. As always, the Food Systems work team for CSU Extension is committed to building a stronger network of those who work on systems-based issues.

The distribution of this newsletter is one way to build that network. You can help us be better connected in three ways:

- **Forward** this newsletter to anyone with an interest in local food systems and CSU's programs in this area, and tell them they are welcome to contact us so we can add them to our mailing list.
- **Send us** any events and news from your organization and other partners so that we may share them with our growing readership!
- **Consider writing** a regional update so we can begin featuring updates from Colorado regions in each newsletter. Contact us if you want to be a regional lead!

To assist our readers in finding information, events and programs we may have presented in the past, you can find old issues at: <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/cis/localfood.html>.

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## COLORADO MARKETMAKER: REGISTER NOW



In recent months the national MarketMaker team has made notable progress in bringing value to its partners. The development of a cattle portal, mobile app, a potential partnership with USDA Ag Marketing Service and updates to the mapping system are all underway. We believe these features will be game changers for MarketMaker's functionality. It is an exciting time!

Throughout 2016, MarketMaker will transition away from Riverside Research to the Global Food and Agriculture Network (GFAN). GFAN was developed by the founders of MarketMaker, Dar and Rich Kripe and Dick Warner, to create a more effective private/public partnership to facilitate the MarketMaker network and manage the technology. The MarketMaker management and technology teams are committed to providing continued support.



Spring is the perfect time to register your farm or agri-business through Colorado's MarketMaker Tool.

Showcase your business with a specialized profile and detail what you have to offer with products/services listings. Don't be left out; with Market Maker's new Business Network feature you can promote all of your connections with other businesses using MarketMaker. The new Buy/Sell Forum Alerts provide you with real-time notices of posted ads so you can take advantage of the rapidly growing networks.

Click [here](#) to register.



**Specialized Profile**

Create a page to showcase your business



**Products/Services Listing**

Detail what your business has to offer



**Business Network**

Promote all of your connections



**Buy/Sell Forum Alerts**

Receive real-time notices of posted ads

For more information visit [co.foodmarketmaker.com](http://co.foodmarketmaker.com).

## COLORADO FOOD SYSTEMS ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE



### COLORADO FOOD SYSTEMS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (COFSAC), established through the LiveWell Colorado-initiated Senate Bill 10-106, is a legislatively-mandated, volunteer-based, 15-member body of state agencies and diverse food systems stakeholders.

The COFSAC charge is to advance recommendations that strengthen healthy food access for all Coloradans through Colorado agriculture and local food systems and economies.

#### **Who makes up the Council?**

The Council comprises fifteen appointees representing a broad spectrum of government and non-government entities. The members represent most sectors of the food system and allow for a very diverse council in background and experience.

CSU Extension is now represented by Dr. Dawn Thilmany, as appointed by VP Lou Swanson.

Other new members of the Council who were appointed in the last year include:

**Joyce Kelly**, Executive Director, Colorado Pork Producers Council

**Sandra Stenmark**, Kaiser Permanente

**Wendy Peters Moschetti**, LiveWell Colorado

**Meighen Dossin Lovelace**, Eagle County

**Dr. Becca Jablonski**, Assistant Professor, Ag and Resource Economics CSU, COFSAC staff

Other member profiles can be found at the [COFSAC website](#).

## GRANTS: VALUE ADDED PRODUCER GRANT

The Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based, value-added products. Generating

new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities, and increasing producer income are the goals of this program. You may receive priority if you are a beginning farmer or rancher, a socially-disadvantaged farmer or rancher, a small or medium-sized farm or ranch structured as a family farm, a farmer or rancher cooperative, or are proposing a mid-tier value chain. Grants are awarded through a national competition.

Independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer- or rancher-cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures are eligible to apply for this program.

Past grants in Colorado have included:

- Colorado Homestead Markets
- Avalanche Cheese Company
- Jodar Farms
- Rio Culebra Ag Cooperative

**Applications are due June 24, 2016.**

Application forms can be found here:

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/value-added-producer-grants>.

There are local representatives to help guide you through the grant process, and a list of those offices in Colorado can be found here: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/co>.

For more details and instructions for registering for the VAPG click [here](#).

## **GRANTS: FARM STORAGE LOANS EXPANDED TO HELP FARMERS REACH LOCAL FOOD MARKETS**

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) [announced](#) in April that their [Farm Storage Facility Loan](#) program can now help finance a variety of infrastructure needed by food enterprises including:

- portable storage structures
- portable equipment, and
- storage and handling trucks,

in addition to continuing its longstanding capacity to finance stationary crop and cold storage on-farm facilities. This expansion of the low-interest loan program will help FSA better serve fruit and vegetable farmers and others who need to get crops safely and efficiently to local farmers' markets, schools, restaurants, food hubs, and retail stores.

The program also offers a new "microloan" option, which allows applicants seeking less than \$50,000 to qualify for a reduced down payment of five percent and no requirement to provide three years of production history.

Farms and ranches of all sizes are eligible. The microloan option is expected to be of particular benefit to smaller farms and ranches, and specialty crop producers who may not have access to commercial storage or on-farm storage after harvest. These producers can invest in equipment like conveyers, scales or refrigeration units and trucks that can store commodities before delivering them to markets.

## GRANTS: NEW FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR FOOD SAFETY TRAINING PROJECTS

USDA recently announced the availability of \$4.7 million in grants for food safety education, training, and technical assistance projects that address the needs of owners and operators of small to mid-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially-disadvantaged farmers, small processors, small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers, food hubs, farmers' markets, and others. The grants, offered through the [Food Safety Outreach Program](#) and administered by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), are designed to help these stakeholders comply with new food safety guidelines established by the Food and Drug Administration under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

NIFA will fund three types of projects to help producers comply with FSMA.

- Pilot projects will support the development and implementation of new and potentially high-risk, high-impact food safety education and outreach programs in local communities that address the needs of small, specialized audiences from among the various target groups.
- Community outreach projects will focus on the growth and expansion of already-existing food safety education and outreach programs that are currently offered in local communities.
- Multi-state education and training projects will support the development and implementation of multi-county, state-wide, or multi-state food safety education and outreach programs where there are common food safety concerns, but the states are not necessarily located within the same regions.

## GRANTS: SUMMER AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD INITIATIVE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

This summer the USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) is offering grants for research topics. Although these are generally targeted at Universities, non-profits, industry research units and academic research organizations, the need for stakeholder involvement, advising and outreach makes it important that you engage your academic partners if you want to work on a topic in Colorado, and there are many possibilities to shape, guide and participate in the work.

Research grants competing this summer include:

[Food Security Challenge](#) (Deadline: 7/7/2016)

The AFRI Food Security Challenge Area focuses on the societal challenge to keep American agriculture competitive and end world hunger by ensuring the availability and accessibility of safe and nutritious food. The long-term goal of the AFRI Food Security Challenge Area is to sustainably increase agricultural productivity and the availability and accessibility of safe and nutritious food.

[AFRI Foundational Program](#) (Multiple deadlines between 7/13/2016 and 8/31/2016)

The AFRI Foundational Program is offered to support grants in the six AFRI priority areas to continue building a foundation of knowledge critical for solving current and future societal challenges. The six priority areas are: Plant Health and Production and Plant Products; Animal Health and Production and Animal Products; Food Safety, Nutrition, and Health; Bioenergy, Natural Resources, and Environment; Agriculture Systems and Technology; and Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities. Single-function Research Projects, multi-function Integrated Projects, and Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement

(FASE) Grants are expected to address one of the Program Area Priorities (see Foundational Program RFA for details).

[Sustainable Bioenergy and Bioproducts Challenge Area](#) (Deadlines 7/14/2016 and 9/22/2016)

In the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Sustainable Bioenergy and Bioproducts (SBEBP) Challenge Area, specific program areas are designed to achieve the long term outcome of reducing national dependence on foreign oil through the development and production of regionally-appropriate sustainable bioenergy systems that materially deliver advanced liquid transportation biofuels, biopower, and bioproducts.

[Food Safety Challenge](#) (Deadline: 8/3/2016)

This AFRI Challenge Area promotes and enhances the scientific discipline of food safety, with an overall aim of protecting consumers from microbial and chemical contaminants that may occur during all stages of the food chain, from production to consumption. This requires an understanding of the interdependencies of human, animal, and ecosystem health as it pertains to foodborne pathogens. The long-term outcome for this program is to reduce foodborne illnesses and deaths by improving the safety of the food supply, which will result in reduced impacts on public health and on our economy. In order to achieve this outcome, this program will support single-function Research Projects and multi-function Integrated Research, Education, and/or Extension Projects, and Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement (FASE) Grants that address one of the Program Area Priorities (see Food Safety RFA for details).

[Water for Agriculture Challenge](#) (Deadline: 8/4/2016)

This AFRI Challenge Area addresses critical water resources issues such as drought, excess soil moisture, flooding, quality and others in an agricultural context. Funding will be used to develop management practices, technologies, and tools for farmers, ranchers, forest owners and managers, public decision makers, public and private managers, and citizens to improve water resource quantity and quality. The long-term goal of the AFRI Water for Agriculture Challenge Area is to tackle critical water issues by developing both regional systems for the sustainable use and reuse, flow and management of water, and at the watershed and farm scales, water issues focused on production and environmental sustainability efforts. Project types supported within this Challenge area are multi-function Integrated Research, Education, and/or Extension Projects and Food and Agricultural Enhancement (FASE) Grants.

Note that the Requests for Applications (RFAs) for many of these are complex, but there are very nice summaries of priority topics and, in many cases, links to past projects to learn more about what is generally funded. For more information on grant opportunities offered by AFRI and the USDA click [here](#).

## **GRANTS: WESTERN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION (WSARE)**

The Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (WSARE) program is looking for innovative proposals that help advance American agriculture by improving profitability, stewardship, and quality of life. These are helpful grants for those focused on farm-level issues, using creative partnerships between producers, community groups, universities and other partners to research, share and implement sustainable changes.

Unlike the federal USDA grants, these programs are generally targeted to serve a community of stakeholders who want to work together on place-based research. WSARE invites proposals for the following 2017 competitive grants programs:

1. Research and Education (R&E), due June 1, 2016- *LETTER OF INTEREST DEADLINE*
2. Professional Development Program (PDP), due October 26, 2016
3. Farmer/Rancher Grants (FRG), due December 7, 2016
4. Professional + Producer (P+P), due December 7, 2016

For more information click [here](#).

## GRANTS: HEALTHY EATING RESEARCH

Healthy Eating Research is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). The program supports research on environmental and policy strategies with strong potential to promote healthy eating among children to prevent childhood obesity, especially among groups at highest risk for obesity: black, Latino, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander children, and children who live in lower-income communities. Findings are expected to advance RWJF's efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic, eliminate disparities, and help all children achieve a healthy weight.

This call for proposals (CFP) is for two types of awards aimed at providing advocates, decision-makers, and policymakers with evidence to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic. The award types are: Round 10 grants and RWJF New Connections grants awarded through the Healthy Eating Research program.

Approximately \$2.6 million will be awarded under this CFP for the two award types.

### Round 10 Grants:

- The Round 10 grants represent the majority of RWJF's investment in research through this program.
- Approximately \$2.4 million will be awarded through Round 10. Each grant will award up to \$190,000, for a maximum funding period of 18 months.
- There are two deadlines for receipt of concept papers: May 11, 2016 and August 3, 2016 (both by 3 p.m. ET).

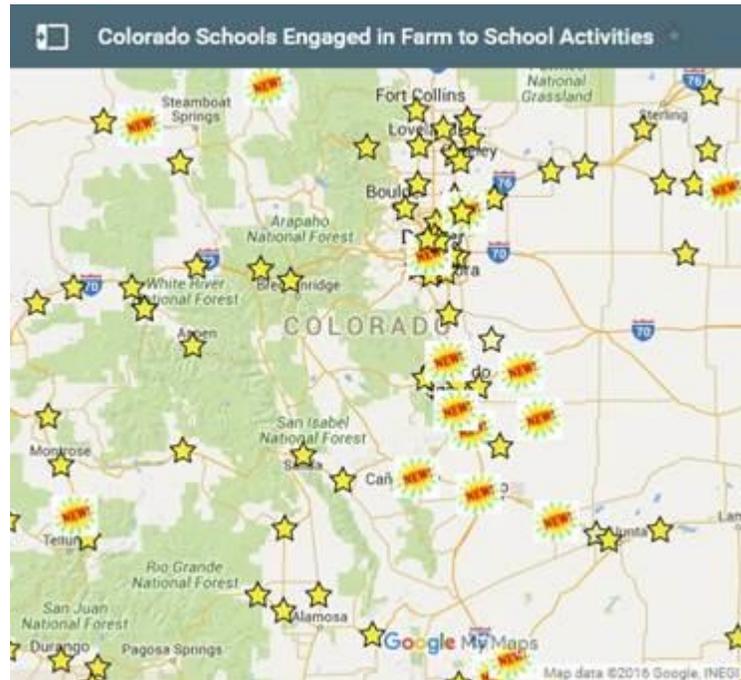
### RWJF New Connections Grants Awarded through Healthy Eating Research:

- These grants are to support policy-relevant research of early-career investigators from backgrounds that are underrepresented in research disciplines supported by RWJF, or historically disadvantaged. For the purpose of this CFP, only new investigators, defined as individuals who received their doctorate or terminal degree within 10 years prior to the award date for the grant (after December 1, 2006) are eligible to apply.
- Up to two RWJF New Connections grants will be awarded through the Healthy Eating Research program in this round of funding. Awards will be for 12- to 18-month grants of up to \$100,000 each.
- Deadline for receipt of concept papers: June 1, 2016 (3 p.m. ET).

Click [here](#) for more details and how to apply.

## NEWS: FARM TO SCHOOL PARTICIPANT MAP

Colorado Farm to School has added a new map feature to identify schools participating in a Farm to School program. There are currently 105 school districts engaged in Food to School programs throughout Colorado, with new programs frequently added. The map feature includes information on each Farm to School program and also indicates new programs.



Check out more features of the new mapping tool [here](#).

For more information about Colorado Farm to School visit their website at: [Coloradofarmtoschool.org](http://Coloradofarmtoschool.org).

## NEWS: SAVE THE FOOD CAMPAIGN

The Natural Resources Defense Council and the Ad Council have developed a new set of videos, posters, public service announcements and social media assets to promote awareness about food waste. Their website, [savethefood.com](http://savethefood.com), contains tips for food storage, meal planning, shopping guidelines and information about dates listed on products.

If you or someone you know is interested in promoting the Save the Food campaign visit the [Press Toolkit](#) for publicly available resources and promotional material. Help spread the word and reduce food waste!

## NEWS: BRIDGES TO OPPORTUNITY

The USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) [Bridges to Opportunity](#) service "bridges" the gap between agricultural producers and non-USDA partner organizations. Launched in select FSA county

offices in April 2016, the Bridges software application allows FSA to provide additional services to farmers and ranchers to benefit and grow their operations and ultimately help them meet their goals.

USDA has partnered with numerous local, state, regional and national agricultural organizations that offer programs, nongovernmental grants, technical assistance, financial advice and other information helpful to today's producers. Instead of farmers and ranchers researching for hours to find services offered by these organizations, a visit to their [county office](#) to meet with an FSA representative can help answer many of these questions.

Bridges works most effectively when a producer comes into a county office to request information.

- For example, a farmer or rancher may need information on organic production. An FSA employee can enter "organics" in the Bridges software application and a list of all local, state, regional and national organizations offering resources and services on organic production will come up.
- The FSA employee can email or print the information for the producer and send an email to one or more partner organizations, informing them that the producer has an interest in learning more about their service or program.
- The Bridges software application will contain information on all subject matters that affect producers, such as drought relief, beginning farmer information and disaster assistance.

Colorado counties involved in Bridges to Opportunity include:

- Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Jefferson, Larimer, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Weld, and Yuma.

## USDA LOCAL FOOD MARKETING SURVEY

USDA recently launched the inaugural Local Food Marketing Practices Survey, the first-ever survey of farmers and ranchers conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to produce benchmark data about local food. The Survey confidentially examines the production and marketing of foods produced in 2015 by U.S. farmers and ranchers. Specific attention is given to production and marketing of local foods directly to consumers and to retailers that sell to consumers.

*Please encourage farmers and ranchers in your networks to fill out the survey if they received it.* NASS has already contacted approximately 44,300 local farmers and ranchers. While USDA continues to promote Survey participation, your additional support in promotion of the Survey submission is critical to its success!

The initial deadline has passed but there is still time for producers to respond by filling out the survey online at [www.agcounts.usda.gov](http://www.agcounts.usda.gov), or returning the form by mail. NASS will also send another mailing as a reminder to those who have not completed their survey. If respondents have additional questions, they may call 888-424-7828 or email [nass@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov).

## TOOLKIT ON URBAN AGRICULTURE

**Urban agriculture: the latest local and regional food system frontier!**

USDA has unveiled the [USDA Urban Agriculture Toolkit](#), a new resource to help entrepreneurs and communities interested in urban agriculture. From neighborhood gardens grown on repurposed lots, to intensive hydroponic and aquaculture operations, urban food production is rapidly growing in cities across the country.

USDA's Toolkit helps urban farms navigate more than 70 helpful resources, including technical assistance and financing opportunities. It focuses on some of the most pressing challenges confronting urban producers such as land access, soil quality, water resources, capital and financing, infrastructure, market development, production strategies, and connecting with local USDA offices.

[Take a look](#) and see what USDA has to offer urban producers and stakeholders!

## TRAINING: COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCERS

CSU Extension is hosting training workshops throughout the state that cover Colorado Cottage Food Act topics and help you safely operate a food business from your home kitchen.

You will learn:

- Basic food safety for Tier 1 foods, including proper hygiene; preventing cross contamination & cross contact of food allergens; temperature control for safe food preparation storage, transport & sales;
- Foods permissible in Colorado's Cottage Food Act;
- Ingredient labeling & disclaimer requirements;
- Special considerations for food preparation at altitude; and
- Great resources and contact information.

**Tri-River Area:** All classes from 9am-12pm--March 16<sup>th</sup> (Business Incubator, Grand Junction); May 18<sup>th</sup> (Montrose County Fairgrounds); July 13<sup>th</sup> (First Baptist Church, Delta); October 5<sup>th</sup> (Business Incubator, Grand Junction); October 19<sup>th</sup> (Montrose County Fairgrounds). Contact Ann Duncan for more information ([ann.duncan@colostate.edu](mailto:ann.duncan@colostate.edu) or 970-244-1834).

**La Plata County:** October 4 at 9 am and October 10 at 4:30pm. Contact Wendy Rice for more information ([wendy.rice@colostate.edu](mailto:wendy.rice@colostate.edu) or 970-382-6461).

**El Paso County:** Saturday June 11 from 12-3pm. Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cottage-food-safety-training-el-paso-county-tickets-24851145445>. Contact Briana Rockler for more information ([Briana.rockler@colostate.edu](mailto:Briana.rockler@colostate.edu) or 719-520-7689).

**Front Range region:** find dates and register here: <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/csu-extension-food-preservation-6622808397>. Contact Anne Zander for more information ([azander@bouldercounty.org](mailto:azander@bouldercounty.org) or 303-678-6238).

## WORKSHOPS: BACKYARD FOOD PRODUCTION – EAT WHAT YOU GROW!

Colorado State University Extension is hosting a 12-week workshop series to help you take your garden to a whole new level! Local experts will teach topics such as:

- June 7: Weed Management
- July 12: Soil Types and Amendments
- July 26: Small Fruits and Berries
- August 16: Tree Fruit Production and Pruning
- August 23: Season Extension
- August 30: Food Preservation
- September 13: Harvest and Post-harvest Storage

Classes will be held Tuesdays, from 6:00 to 8:00pm at the La Plata County Fairgrounds in Durango, CO. The cost is \$130 for all 12 sessions. For more information and to register go to: [www.laplataextension.org](http://www.laplataextension.org). For questions call: [970-382-6464](tel:970-382-6464).

## RESOURCES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Don't forget! Colorado State University Extension Food Systems and Agricultural Policy Resources:

- [Consumer Resources](#)
- [Producer Resources](#)
- [Linking Producers to Restaurants, Workplaces and Other Institutions](#)
- [Linking Producers to Schools - Networks, Directories and Guides](#)
- [Community Assessments and Toolkits](#)
- [Calculators and Databases](#)
- [Policy Articles, Resources and Case Studies](#)
- [Research and Other Resources](#)

To add your ideas and news, contact [Jeremy Christensen](#).

To subscribe and unsubscribe to this newsletter, contact [Martha Sullins](#).